

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PA 275 of 2008 Boilerplate Report</b> <b>Section 741</b></p>
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Per Section 741 of 2008 PA275, the Department is required to report to the house of representatives and senate appropriations subcommittees on transportation, the house and senate fiscal agencies, and the state budget director on progress made to improve the Ann Arbor and Northwest Michigan railroad system's track infrastructure for the purpose of supporting passenger train speed of 59 miles per hour.

The "Ann Arbor and Northwest Michigan" railroad system extends from Ann Arbor northwesterly to Yuma, Traverse City and Petoskey. With the exception of the portion between Durand and Owosso, the corridor is owned by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). Great Lakes Central Railroad (GLC) provides freight service to shippers on the line under an agreement with MDOT, and hopes to incorporate passenger service in the near future.

While GLC envisions passenger service someday extending all the way to Traverse City and Petoskey, the initial focus of passenger operations is the segment between Ann Arbor and Howell. A coalition of local government officials and business leaders has been formed (nicknamed "WALLY", for the Washtenaw and Livingston Line) to support that effort. In response to requests from local and county officials involved in the coalition, the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) recently agreed to serve as the designated authority and work to move the project forward. MDOT continues to work with AATA and other supporters of the service to make this commuter rail option a reality. A project to replace four failing culverts on the line just north of Ann Arbor, at a cost of \$188,000, was initiated during FY2008 and will be completed in FY2009. This work is designed to stabilize the overall infrastructure.

Meanwhile, the Department has undertaken a series of track rehabilitation projects farther north on the corridor – between Bannister and Ithaca. These projects, while designed to facilitate freight operations, would benefit future passenger operations as well. A 6.04-mile long, \$2.84 million project constructed in FY2008 is the final piece of track, bridge and crossing work in this effort. In total, \$6.78 million was invested in this 14.36-mile portion of the corridor. The main focus of the work was to upgrade the rail and improve the overall track condition to maintain a design speed of 40 miles per hour for freight purposes. It would appear that, with minor adjustments to crossings within the project limits equipped with active warning devices, these improvements would support 59-mph passenger operations.

*Bureau of Aeronautics and Freight Services  
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